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Cuban Aftermath

ONE INESCAPABLE conclusion emerges from the short-lived rebellion against Castro's Cuba: the affair was a monumental blunder. Premier Castro and Khrushchev are doing the expected and trying to crow the incident into a catastrophe for the United States in Latin America and the world.

President Kennedy is not dismissing the disaster to the Cuban freedom movement lightly, but apparently has decided not to waste time in useless hand-wringing. What is more important to the United States, the President indicates, is to make ready for the next round.

To this end Mr. Kennedy has asked his brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, to assist in an investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency's part leading up to the brief invasion of Cuba. He also has recalled Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, former Army chief of staff, to head the survey of CIA.

The President is not openly blaming CIA Director Allen Dulles or his deputy, Richard M. Bissell, Jr., who furnished Mr. Kennedy with the intelligence report on Cuba. But the White House naturally wants to know how the CIA, with agents all over Cuba, could be so wrong in predicting that the island was ripe for revolt against Castro.

Mr. Kennedy outlined the problem before the American Society of Newspaper Editors last week. He commented:

"Too long we have fixed our eyes on traditional military needs, on armies prepared to cross borders or missiles poised for flight. Now it should be clear that this is no longer enough—that our security may be lost piece by piece, country by country without the firing of a single missile or the crossing of a single border."

The President also vowed "to profit by this lesson." He promised to re-examine "our forces of all kinds, our tactics and our institutions . . . for a struggle in many ways more difficult than war." It almost was automatic that the first move to carry out these words would be an investigation of the CIA, which spends an estimated several \$100 million annually.

Accurate intelligence is vital to American survival in a life-and-death struggle with a foe who has mastered the knack of infiltrating countries and bringing about their downfall to Communism from within. If we have not learned yet how to cope with the enemy on this front, we are indeed beginning at a very late hour.